The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the present application.

LISTING OF THE CLAIMS:

1. – 30. (Canceled)

31. (New) A method for establishing communications between first and second parties through the intermediary of a server device, said method comprising the steps of:

a) generating a request initiated by a first party for establishing a communications channel over a telephone communications network between said first party and a second party;

b) said server device intercepting said request and attempting to establish said communications channel over said telephone communications network;

c) monitoring, at said server, whether said communications channel over a telephone communications network has been established in said telephone communications network;

d) upon determining a failure to establish said communications channel over said telephone communications network, translating, at said server, the request into a data network object, said data network object representing a communications capability for subsequently establishing, at one or more times, a communications channel between said first party and second party via said telephone communications network, said data network object being a persistent object and maintaining state information concerning use of said communications capability, and, said state information being updateable by said server; said maintained state information including at least: an identification (ID) of the first party and the telephone number of a telephone network node associated with said first party, as well as the telephone number associated with the second party's telephone network node, the IP address or host name of the first party's data network node, a message from the first party to the second party, an indication of a number of times the second party is allowed to invoke a communications capability, and, a counter device to be decremented each time a communication capability was successfully used;

e) sending the data network object to the second party via a data communications network, said data network object enabling a second party to communicate acceptance of communicating with said first party back to said server device, said data object persisting after the first party has disconnected from the telephone communications network;

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f) upon receipt of said acceptance, initiating via said server device, creation of a communications channel between the first and second parties over said telephone communications network,

wherein said server device is connected to both said telephone communications and second telephone communications networks, said data network object further including a request for said acceptance appearing on a second party's attached network device, and

said second party accepting said request communicated in said data network object and communicating this acceptance to the server device via the data communications network, and, in response to communicating acceptance, server device decrementing said counter device and updating said state information accordingly.

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